



Figure 1

All depictions are approximate. Not a survey product. 02.05.19



# Project Location and Vicinity

ENPLAN

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**Notice of Exemption**

2019048194

**City of Anderson Wastewater and Solar Energy Efficiency Project**

As described in the Notice of Exemption (NOE), the proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to §15301 (Class 1-Existing Facilities); §15302 (Class 2-Replacement or Reconstruction); §15303 (Class 3-New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures); and §15304 (Class 4-Minor Alterations to Land) of the CEQA Guidelines. CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 identifies exceptions that override a lead agency's ability to use a categorical exemption. These exceptions are listed below, followed by documentation of why each exception does not apply to the proposed Project.

- 1. Cumulative Impact.** *All exemptions are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time, is significant.*

The Project involves improvements to the City's Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) and installation of a solar array southwest of the WPCP. The purpose of the project is to replace aging infrastructure (filter pumps), improve efficiency in the treatment process by converting the WPCP from a chlorine gas disinfection system to an ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system, and offset energy consumption by installing photovoltaic (PV) solar panels. The project has no growth-inducing impacts because no expansion of the WPCP would occur, and no successive projects of the same type in this location are proposed. Therefore, the proposed Project's impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

- 2. Significant Effect.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

An "unusual circumstance" exists if the project's circumstances differ from the general circumstances of projects covered by the applicable exemption, and, if so, whether there is a reasonable possibility of a significant effect on the environment **due to** the unusual circumstances. As documented below, there are no unusual circumstances that would preclude a categorical exemption for the proposed Project.

**Aesthetics:**

Improvements on the WPCP property include construction of a ±625 square foot building for UV disinfection system equipment. A small shed (±200 square feet) would be removed from the property, and the new building would be constructed in the same area as the shed. Although the new building would be larger than the shed, the building would not be prominently visible from any public viewpoint.

The solar array and accessory structures would be placed in an adjoining undeveloped area southwest of the WPCP property. The height of the solar panels would be ±6 feet. Only minor grading would be required to facilitate drainage on the property, and no trees would be removed to accommodate the proposed improvements. The closest public viewpoints from the solar array are a pedestrian trail ±50 feet to the north and baseball fields ±275 feet to the north. The closest residences are ±600 feet to the northwest. Although the solar field would be visible from these viewpoints, chain-link fencing six feet in height with privacy slats would be installed around the solar improvements to minimize visual impacts. Lighting is limited to security lighting that would be activated by a motion sensor. Lighting would be directed downward to minimize light trespass in accordance with the City's standards. Because solar panels are designed to absorb as much sunlight as possible, they are furnished with an anti-reflective coating; thus, the Project would not result in significant impacts due to glare. Temporary visual impacts during construction due to excavation and staging activities would cease at the completion of the improvements.

**Agriculture and Forest Resources:**

The solar array and associated solar improvements are located on a soil type that meets the definition of prime farmland (if irrigated). The solar array site is also designated as Grazing Land by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). To determine the Project's potential impacts on farmland, a Farmland Impact Assessment was conducted by ENPLAN in February 2019.

The California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) model (1997) was used for the farmland impact assessment. The California LESA model is comprised of six assessment factors: Two Land Evaluation (LE) factors are based upon measures of soil resource quality. Four Site Assessment (SA) factors provide measures of a given project's size, water resource availability, surrounding agricultural lands, and surrounding protected resource lands (e.g., lands under Williamson Act contracts). Each of these factors is separately rated on a 100-point scale. The factors are then weighted relative to one another and combined, resulting in a single numeric score that becomes the basis for making a determination of a project's potential significance.

The LESA analysis concluded that the proposed Project would not have a significant impact on prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance. The proposed Project would result in the loss of approximately 1.5 acres of Grazing Land as mapped by the FMMP, which represents approximately 0.0004 percent of designated Grazing Land in Shasta County. According to the City, no portion of the property is zoned for agricultural activity, and the City does not require mitigation for the conversion of Grazing Land. In addition, no trees would be removed to accommodate the proposed improvements; therefore, the Project would not impact forest resources.

**Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions:**

Shasta County is currently designated a non-attainment area for State ozone standards. The County is designated as an attainment or unclassified area for all other federal and State ambient air quality standards. Emissions during construction would be minimal and cease at completion of the improvements. Although converting the WPCP from a chlorine disinfection system to a UV disinfection system would result in an increase in indirect emissions associated with electricity required to operate the UV lamps, the Project includes installation of a solar array that will offset indirect emissions. There are no unusual circumstances associated with the proposed Project related to air quality or GHG emissions.

**Biological Resources:*****Special-Status Plant Species:***

Review of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) species list for the Project area identified one federally listed plant species, slender Orcutt grass, as potentially occurring in the Project Area. The Project area does not contain designated critical habitat for federally listed plant species.

A review of California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) records showed that one special-status plant, silky cryptantha, was reported in the general Project area in 1994. The species was observed in the Sacramento River floodplain in riverwash with sparse riparian vegetation. The following additional special-status plants have been reported within a five-mile radius of the Project site: Ahart's paronychia, Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop, legenere, and Red Bluff dwarf rush. Two non-status plants, Henderson's bent grass and woolly meadowfoam, have been reported within the search radius.

Field surveys were completed by an ENPLAN biologist on October 9, 2018, and February 7, 2019. The special-status plant species potentially occurring in the Project area would not have been evident at the time the fieldwork was conducted; however, determination of their potential presence could readily be made based on observed habitat characteristics. Due to past land disturbance, no suitable habitat for special-status plants exists in the Project site. No special-status plant species were observed during the surveys or are anticipated to occur in the Project site.

***Special-Status Wildlife Species:***

Review of the USFWS species list for the Project area identified the following federally listed animal

species as potentially being present in the Project area: California red-legged frog, delta smelt, valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB), conservancy fairy shrimp, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and vernal pool tadpole shrimp. The USFWS species list does not identify designated critical habitat in the study area for any federally listed animal species. Review of CNDDB records showed no special-status animal species have been reported in the Project site. Twelve special-status animals have been reported within a five-mile radius of the Project site: bald eagle, bank swallow, Chinook salmon-Sacramento River winter-run ESU, steelhead - Central Valley DPS, tricolored blackbird, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, western pond turtle, western red bat, and western spadefoot. The following five non-status animals have been mapped within the five-mile search radius: California linderiella, hoary bat, osprey, silver-haired bat, and yuma myotis.

To determine the presence/absence of special-status animal species, a wildlife survey of the Project area was completed by an ENPLAN biologist on October 23, 2018. Most of the special-status animal species potentially occurring in the Project area would not have been evident at the time the fieldwork was conducted; however, determination of their potential presence could readily be made based on observed habitat characteristics. Due to past land disturbance, no suitable habitat for special-status animals exists in the Project site. No special-status animal species were observed during the survey or are anticipated to occur in the Project site.

***Natural Communities/Sensitive Habitats:***

CNDDB records identify Great Valley Valley Oak Riparian Forest  $\pm 400$  feet northeast of the proposed solar improvements. In addition, the Sacramento River is located  $\pm 1,100$  feet to the north. Due to the distance from the Project site, the proposed Project would have no direct or indirect impact on the Great Valley Valley Oak Riparian Forest or the Sacramento River. A wetland assessment was conducted by an ENPLAN biologist on February 7, 2019. No wetlands or other waters of the U.S. or State were identified in the Project site. There is no other undisturbed, unique, or high-quality habitat in or immediately adjacent to the Project site.

***Nesting Migratory Birds***

The USFWS identified the following migratory birds as potentially being present in the Project area: bald eagle, California thrasher, common yellowthroat, golden eagle, Lewis's woodpecker, Nuttall's woodpecker, oak titmouse, rufous hummingbird, song sparrow, spotted towhee, tricolored blackbird, wren, and yellow-billed magpie. Because work will be conducted in previously disturbed areas and no trees or other significant vegetation would be removed, the Project would have no impact on nesting migratory birds.

**Geology and Soils:**

According to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, the closest Special Study Zone is the Hat Creek Fault Zone, approximately 48 miles northeast of the Project site. In addition, review of the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) earthquake fault map shows the potentially active Battle Creek Fault approximately six miles south of the Project site. However, this is not unique to the proposed Project. Soils in the Project site are mapped by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as Reiff fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes, and Anderson gravelly sand loam. These soil types are found throughout the Anderson area and are not unique to the Project site.

**Hydrology and Water Quality**

Construction activities would result in the temporary disturbance of soil and would expose disturbed areas to potential storm events, which could generate accelerated runoff, localized erosion, and sedimentation. However, this is a temporary impact during grading and construction activities, and no long-term impacts would occur. There is nothing unique about this property that would result in significant impacts.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (Panel 06089C1935G, effective March 16, 2011), the Project site is located within a FEMA shaded zone X (area with a 0.2% annual chance of flooding); however, the Project site is located outside of the 100-year special flood hazard area.



**Land Use and Planning:**

The proposed Project would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulations that are specific to the Project site.

**Mineral Resources:**

The California Geological Survey has not designated any Mineral Resource Zones in the Project area. In addition, there are no properties in the Project area that are zoned for mining activities.

**Noise:**

Construction activities would generate noise and may temporarily increase noise levels in the area. However, there is nothing unique to the Project that would result in more significant impacts than other construction projects in the area. The Project does not include any components that would result in a significant increase in long-term noise impacts.

**Population and Housing:**

Because the Project does not include any components that would increase capacity in the wastewater system, the Project would not induce population growth in the area beyond that currently projected in the City's General Plan.

**Public Services:**

Because the Project would not induce population growth, the Project would not generate a demand for additional fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public services.

**Recreation:**

The WPCP is located within Anderson River Park; however, none of the proposed improvements would directly impact recreational facilities. Because the Project would not induce population growth, the Project would not result in the need for additional recreational facilities.

**Transportation/Traffic:**

Because the Project would not induce population growth, the Project would not result in a permanent increase in traffic. Access to the Project site would be via existing roads, and no new access routes to the site would need to be constructed. There would be short-term increases in traffic in the area associated with construction workers and equipment; however, existing regulations require safety measures to be employed as necessary to safeguard travel by the general public during construction.

**Utilities and Service Systems:**

Because the Project would not induce population growth, the Project would not result in an increased demand for water supply or generate solid waste in excess of existing conditions. The Project includes minor extensions of utilities for the new UV disinfection building and the solar equipment; however, as documented herein, installation of these utilities would not cause significant environmental effects.

- 3. Scenic Highways.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a State Scenic Highway.*

According to the California Scenic Highway Mapping System, there are no officially designated State Scenic Highways in the Project area. The nearest designated State Scenic Highway is a portion of Route 151 (Shasta Dam Boulevard), located approximately 17 miles northwest of the Project area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**4. Hazardous Waste Sites.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to §65962.5 of the Government Code.*

The following databases were reviewed to determine whether the Project site is identified as a hazardous waste site pursuant to Government Code §65962.5: List of Hazardous Waste and Substances sites from the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database; SWRCB GeoTracker Database; List of solid waste disposal sites identified by SWRCB with waste constituents above hazardous waste levels outside the waste management unit; List of active Cease and Desist Orders and Clean-Up and Abatement Orders from the SWRCB.

None of these databases identified the Project site as a hazardous waste site or active cleanup site. In addition, there are no active hazardous waste sites or active cleanup sites within a one-mile radius of the Project site. The proposed Project would not involve the use or disposal of any hazardous materials, flammables, or explosives.

**5. Historical Resources.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

PaleoWest, LLC (PaleoWest), conducted a records search for the proposed Project on June 25, 2018, at the Northeast Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (NEIC), at California State University, Chico. The records search was completed to identify cultural resources within a half-mile radius around the Project site. The records search included an archival review of official records and maps of Shasta County, including the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) – Listed Properties and Determined Eligible Properties (2012), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (2012), California Points of Historical Interest (2012), California Inventory of Historic Resources (1976), California Historical Landmarks (2012), Directory of Properties in the Historic Property Data Files for Shasta County (2012), Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 8, California (1978), and Historic Spots in California (2002).

The records search revealed that 12 cultural resource surveys have been previously conducted within the half-mile search radius, one of which encompassed a portion of the Project site. Three previously recorded cultural resources were identified within the half-mile radius. No resources were identified in the Project site. The closest recorded site is a historical ranch, approximately 0.5 miles from the proposed solar field.

According to the PaleoWest report, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) conducted a search of the Sacred Lands File and found a positive result in the Project area; however, the specific resource or location was not identified; NAHC recommended that the Nor-Rel-Muk Nation be contacted for information regarding the site. NAHC also provided contact information for other Native American tribes, who were contacted by PaleoWest with a request to provide comments on the proposed Project. One comment was submitted by the Redding Rancheria stating that the area is considered generally sensitive for cultural resources due to its proximity to the Sacramento River. No other comments were submitted to PaleoWest by any Native American tribe.

In accordance with the NAHC's recommendation, ENPLAN contacted Ted Dawson, representative of the Nor-Rel-Muk Nation, to obtain information regarding the potential sacred site. Mr. Dawson stated that the possibility of finding prehistoric remains is high because the area is close to the Sacramento River. In response to Mr. Dawson's request, a site visit was conducted by ENPLAN and Mr. Dawson on March 12, 2019. Mr. Dawson expressed concern regarding the potential for subsurface resources in the solar field and requested that a Native American monitor be on-site during initial earth disturbance in the solar field. Mr. Dawson also commented that he is aware of an archaeological site in the general vicinity, which is likely the resource noted by the NAHC; Mr. Dawson concurred that the off-site resource would not be adversely affected by Project implementation.

Archaeological fieldwork was completed by an ENPLAN archaeologist on February 5, 2019, during which the Area of Potential Effects (APE) was intensively surveyed to identify cultural resources that would be potentially affected by the proposed Project. One historical-era property (the WPCP) was identified during the field survey. The Cultural Resources Inventory Report completed by ENPLAN concludes that although the WPCP is over 50 years old, the WPCP was not found to be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage; is not associated with the lives of persons important in our past; does not embody a distinctive characteristic of a type, period, or

method of construction; and is unlikely to yield information important in prehistory or history. Thus, the WPCP does not meet any of the four eligibility criteria for listing in the NRHP or the CRHR. In addition, no cultural resources were identified in the solar field site.

Although no cultural resources were identified, and the APE contains a considerable amount of modern disturbance, there is always some potential for previously unknown cultural resources to be encountered during site excavation. The following standard construction measures will be included in construction contracts for the Project to address the inadvertent discovery of cultural resources and human remains:

1. In the event of any inadvertent discovery of cultural resources (i.e., burnt animal bone, midden soils, projectile points or other humanly-modified lithics, historic artifacts, etc.), all work within 50 feet of the find shall be halted until a professional archaeologist can evaluate the significance of the find in accordance with PRC §21083.2(g) and §21084.1, and CEQA Guidelines §15064.5(a). If any find is determined to be significant by the archaeologist, the City shall meet with the archaeologist to determine the appropriate course of action. If necessary, a Treatment Plan prepared by an archeologist outlining recovery of the resource, analysis, and reporting of the find shall be prepared. The Treatment Plan shall be reviewed and approved by the City prior to resuming construction.
2. In the event that human remains are encountered during construction activities, the City shall comply with §15064.5 (e) (1) of the CEQA Guidelines and PRC §7050.5. All project-related ground disturbance within 100 feet of the find shall be halted until the County coroner has been notified. If the coroner determines that the remains are Native American, the coroner will notify the NAHC to identify the most likely descendants of the deceased Native Americans. Project-related ground disturbance in the vicinity of the find shall not resume until the process detailed in §15064.5(e) has been completed.

#### DOCUMENTATION:

**California Air Resources Control Board.** 2019 Area Designations Maps—State and National.

<http://www.arb.ca.gov/desig/adm/adm.htm>. Accessed March 2019.

**California Department of Transportation.** 2016. California State Scenic Highway Mapping System. Shasta

County. [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16\\_livability/scenic\\_highways/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/index.htm). Accessed March 2019.

**California Environmental Protection Agency.** 2019. Cortese List Data Resources.

<http://www.calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/>. Accessed March 2019.

**California Natural Diversity Database.** March 2019.

**ENPLAN.** 2019. Farmland Impact Assessment for the City of Anderson Wastewater and Solar Energy Efficiency Project, Shasta County, California.

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**State of California, Department of Conservation.** California Geological Survey. 2019. SMARA Mineral Land Classification Maps. <http://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=mlc>. Accessed March 2019.

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<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/ciff/>. Accessed March 2019.

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<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>. Accessed March 2019.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.** List of Threatened and Endangered Species. March 2019.

**U.S. Geological Survey.** 2019. Interactive Fault Map. <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/hazards/qafaults/map/>. Accessed March 2019.

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